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**Family Living
Focus**
by
Denise A. Talko
Bucks County
Cooperative Extension



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Have A Healthy Smile!

An apple a day keeps the doctor away and maybe the dentist as well. What you choose to eat and drink affects your body, mind, and teeth.

Selecting healthy foods and beverages can help prevent dental caries, along with proper dental hygiene and visiting a dentist regularly. Dental caries is especially prevalent in our nation's pre-school and school-aged children, with 80 percent of them having early childhood caries or cavities.

People are susceptible to cavities for many reasons, but reviewing feeding and eating practices may provide a way for people to make changes that can help prevent or delay the onset of cavities. Recommended infant and child feeding practices and general guidelines for healthful eating apply to your teeth as well.

Pregnant women should get enough nutritious food to ensure proper development of baby's teeth. Put only breast milk, formula, or milk in baby's bottle and do not leave the bottle in the baby's mouth while napping or sleeping. (no juices, sweetened drinks, or cereal in the bottle).

Introduce solid food to baby at around six months of age, not before or after. Follow the order of cereals, vegetables, fruits, and then meats.

Follow regular meal patterns and avoid extended periods of time without any food at all.

Consume less caffeinated and sugary beverages, such as soda pop.

Limit the number of times a day you eat or drink foods that have a high level of refined sugar, such as highly processed starchy snacks, sweetened drinks, and sugary snacks.

Reduce the amount of snacks between meals, especially foods that are sticky and sweet like candy, cake, potato chips, pies, corn chips, cookies, soda pop, ice cream, some crackers, jams and jellies, cocoa, raisins and other dried fruits.

Choose foods that contain protein, calcium, and other healthful nutrients, such as dairy products, fruits, and vegetables.

Other good snack ideas can be popcorn, cheese, lunch meats, water, milk, low sugar yogurt, low sugar cereal, bagels, pizza, eggs, some crackers, and peanut butter on bread (these also provide healthful vitamins and minerals and are healthy smile snacks).

Refined sugar, sugar that is not a natural part of the food or sugar that is manufactured, is the sugar to monitor. If you look at the ingredient list on the food package and see words such as corn syrup, honey, simple syrup, or molasses, that product contains refined sugar. Some

foods like fruits and milk, have natural sugars and needn't be avoided.

Every time you eat or drink something with a high level of refined sugar, the bacteria in your mouth use that sugar as a food. After the bacteria eat the sugar, they leave an acid behind. This acid stays on your teeth for about 20 minutes and can harm the covering of your teeth. This is why the frequency of eating and drinking high sugar snacks is dangerous, because this process occurs each time we eat or drink.

It is worse to have a few cans of sodas at different times throughout the day, then having it just once, at one time. If you choose to have a sugary snack or drink on occasion, have them after eating a well balanced meal.

Here's to happy, healthy smiles!

Candlelight Tours At Hans Herr House

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — The annual Christmas Candlelight Tours of the 1719 Hans Herr House and Museum are scheduled for Friday, Dec. 5, from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and Saturday, Dec. 6, from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

An hour-long tour of the 1719 House will be followed by free refreshments, caroling around a bonfire, and additional demonstrations such as blacksmithing and other special exhibits.

Admission to Christmas Candlelight Tours is \$5 for adults, \$1.50 for children ages 7-12. Ages 6 and under are free. The Hans Herr House is located at 1849 Hans Herr Drive, Willow Street, just 5 miles south of Lancaster off Routes US 222 and PA 741 between the villages of Willow Street and Lampeter. For more information call (717) 464-4438 or see the Museum Website www.hansherr.org.



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